

Wilson

Name: **Woodrow Wilson Junior High School**

Location: 1330 N 90th Street

Building: 27-room brick

Architect: Mallis & DeHart

Site: 16.7 acres

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- 1953: Opened in September by Shoreline School District
 - 1954: Annexed into Seattle School District on July 1
 - 1957: Addition (Mallis & DeHart)
 - 1959: Addition (Mallis & DeHart)
 - 1971: Became *Woodrow Wilson Middle School* on September 1
 - 1978: Closed as middle school in June; reopened as *Wilson-Pacific School* in September
 - 1989: Closed as special school in June; became administrative annex; opened as alternative school site in September
 - 2000: Closed as alternative school site
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The Shoreline School District No. 412 sponsored an essay contest in fall 1947 to name two new junior high schools. Students in grades 6–8 were given a list of American Nobel Prize winners. The winning entry chosen for the school to go in north of Green Lake was Woodrow Wilson Junior High School, honoring Thomas Woodrow Wilson, the 28th president of the United States. Darlene Taylor, a pupil at Lake City School, submitted the winning entry. The other school named in this contest was Jane Addams Junior High School.

While Wilson was originally planned to be a junior high school, in its first year it operated as an intermediate school, with 750 students in grades 5–7.

The Shoreline district had bond money earmarked to complete the school. When it was annexed into the City of Seattle, the grade configuration was changed to grades 7–9. The Seattle School District completed the school with two additions, which opened in fall 1957 (gymnasiums plus metal, wood, and craft shops) and spring 1959 (13 classrooms in a music and science building, plus lunchroom). Situated on nearly 17 acres, Wilson has one of the largest school sites in the district. Enrollment peaked at 1,347 in 1959–60.

Wilson shifted to the middle school format in fall 1971, and was involved as part of the initial desegregation plan of reassigning middle school students between the north end and the central area of the city. In 1972, slightly over one hundred African-American students were bused to Wilson, while white students from Wilson were taken to Meany/Madrona Middle School.

As with many north end schools, enrollment declined in the 1970s. Enrollment was down to 996 in 1974–75. The student body included 146 special education students who were either neurologically-impaired, had emotional, learning or language learning problems, or were mildly mentally handicapped. They were housed separately, with assignments to regular classes made on an individual basis.

When Wilson closed at the end of the 1977–78 school year, enroll-



Wilson, ca. 1974 SPSA 136-124



Wilson, 1955 SPSA 136-125

ment was down to 556 students. Students were reassigned to Thomson, Hamilton, and, for those from the Oak Lake School area, Sharples. At that time, work began to renovate Wilson to house the Pacific School special education program, which was temporarily housed at Washington. At Wilson-Pacific, the program maintained its prevocational emphasis while serving about 200 mildly handicapped students, most junior high or high school age. The program closed in June 1989, and students transferred to other schools. Part of the building then became an administrative annex.

In 1988, when considering the future of Wilson-Pacific, Superintendent Kendrick had recommended consolidating all alternative programs there. Eventually, two programs did locate there. American Indian Heritage School moved into a wing of Wilson in 1989–90. In September 1996, COHO came to Wilson from Broadview-Thomson, only to leave for Monroe after June 1999.

American Indian Heritage School began in 1974 as a unique program with an emphasis on the cultures of American Indians. The program moved five times before coming to Wilson. Its curriculum focuses on the arts, customs, and experiences of these cultures while meeting all state and district academic requirements. Approximately 75 percent of students are American Indian-Native Alaskan. Because of its small size and focus on Indian cultures, “students feel empowered at this school as a majority rather than a minority,” according to the late principal Robert Eaglestaff. They receive more individualized attention and are less likely to drop out of school.

In 1994, American Indian Heritage School celebrated its 20th year with 100 percent of graduates from the previous two years enrolled in colleges. An annual pow-wow that began in 1988 attracts visitors from throughout the area. In May 2000, it was announced that the program would be moving to North Seattle Community College to become the American Indian Heritage Middle College for grades 9–12.

The Wilson Administrative Center was established in 1989. In December 1999, the Seattle Public School Archives moved to the building from Boren until its new home at a new district administrative center can be readied.